

STATE OF IOWA LEGAL SERVICES PLAN
Prepared for Legal Services Corporation
September 30, 1998

The planning process began with discussions between the Deputy Directors of the Legal Services Corporation of Iowa, the Executive Director of LSCI and the Executive Director of the Legal Aid Society of Polk County. Robert N. Downer, past president of the Iowa State Bar Association who served as Chair of the State Planning process in 1995, was consulted early on regarding his willingness to assist in the 1998 planning process. Mr. Downer currently serves as co-chair of the Legal Aid Committee of the Iowa State Bar Association. Brett Toresdahl, the Executive Director of the Iowa State Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project, as well as Dwight Dinkla, the newly-appointed Executive Director of the Iowa State Bar Association were also consulted early on regarding the state planning process. The Executive Director, Deputy Directors, Managing Attorneys and staff attorneys with LSCI put together an initial draft of strengths and weaknesses as well as goals. This draft was then provided to the Executive Director of the Legal Aid Society of Polk County; to HELP Legal Assistance, LSCI's subgrantee; Mr. Downer; Mr. Dinkla and Brett Toresdahl. Copies were also provided to LSCI's Board of Directors and shared with other interested parties by the individuals identified above. Meetings were held with interested parties. Comments were received from a wide variety of individuals with additional drafts being completed and reviewed by interested parties prior to submission of the State Plan which follows.

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I.

**A DELIVERY NETWORK THAT MAXIMIZES CLIENT ACCESS, EFFICIENT
DELIVERY, AND HIGH QUALITY LEGAL ASSISTANCE**

A. Assess the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Current Approach

The Legal Services Corporation of Iowa operates a program which covers 98 out of the 99 counties in Iowa through a network of 9 regional offices and one subgrant with HELP Legal Assistance located in Davenport. (Hereafter, unless otherwise noted, "LSCI" means the nine regional offices and HELP). The offices are strategically located throughout the state, providing access to consumers in the major population centers while also affording access to the rural communities throughout the state. Each office has a toll-free telephone line so that clients anywhere in an office's service area can access the office without charge. Each office provides services to the counties within its service area. These services include intake (primarily telephone intake), advice and referral as well as more substantial case handling including representation in administrative and court matters. Intake hours vary from office to office depending on the number of staff, local grants, court days and other factors. Walk-in clients have applications taken when they come to the office.

The Legal Aid Society of Polk County (LASPC) provides legal services in Polk County, the largest county in Iowa. Persons who live in Polk County, work in the county, or have their legal matters pending in a court in Polk County may be served by LASPC. The services are centralized

in one office located in the Human Service Campus building operated by United Way of Central Iowa. LSCI's offices in Des Moines are also located in this building. Besides intake, advice and referral, the office offers a broad range of legal services consistent with its long history of providing such services in Polk County.

LASPC currently has 7 full-time attorneys, 1 part-time attorney, 4 full-time legal assistants and 6 support staff. LSCI has 50 full-time attorneys, 3 part-time attorneys, 3 paralegals and 33 support staff. Both programs have many in-house volunteers, including licensed attorneys, student interns and community volunteers. Both programs have long-term employees, with 42% of LSCI's staff having 10 or more years of experience with the program and 23% of LASPC's staff. Of the attorneys, 37% of LSCI's attorneys have more than 10 years with LSCI, while 30% of LASPC's attorneys have worked with the organization for 10 years or more.

Other providers of civil legal services to low-income people in Iowa are:

The Youth Law Center, a program that provides representation to youth in civil matters in Polk County.

Drake University Law School Clinic, a project that has offices staffed by students located in Polk, Jasper and Boone Counties. The Clinic also has funding to assist senior citizens in selected areas of the law. Drake and LSCI are working cooperatively to provide expanded services to older Iowans. Drake has established the Elder Law Hotline Project as part of Drake's Center for Public Service Attorneys Professional Development.

The University of Iowa Law School Clinic, a project that provides services to clients, many of whom are low-income, as a part of the law school's clinical education program.

There are two counties in Iowa that provide legal services through local legal aid programs. The Legal Aid Society of Story County has three full-time attorneys serving a county population of approximately 74,640. In 1997, it served more than 430 families. Muscatine County, with a population of 41,435, also has a legal aid program. Muscatine Legal Services has three full-time attorneys. Both county programs operate independently of the LSC-funded programs and handle both civil and some criminal matters. LSCI also provides services to residents of both counties.

Law students at both the University of Iowa College of Law and Drake Law School are involved with providing legal services to low-income people. This involvement includes clinical programs mentioned above, as well as externships in legal services offices in Iowa. The two law schools also receive IOLTA funding to operate the Public Interest Law Internship Program, which results in between 10 and 12 law students working as paid interns in LSCI and LASPC offices each summer.

The written procedures for handling intakes for LSCI include mechanisms to ensure quality control, implement case management systems and provide efficient and effective services for clients. At case staffing, intakes are reviewed to determine what services are appropriate for each client. It is through case staffing that systemic problems may be identified.

Intake at LASPC is for the most part handled by volunteer attorneys from several major law firms in the county using specially designed intake manuals. This is a long-standing volunteer commitment by these major firms and has permitted the program to increase the level of service by freeing staff attorneys from the task of screening clients. Emergency matters are screened immediately to the appropriate case handler, or in some cases, the Volunteer Lawyers Project. Other cases which fall within priorities are usually referred to the two units, the Family Law Unit and the General Law Unit, for weekly case staffing by each unit.

LASPC participates with LSCI in helping to identify legal issues and has encouraged its staff to participate in LSCI's work groups. In addition, LASPC participates with several other agencies in Polk County to serve clients with multiple needs. As an illustration, the Family Violence Center has representatives come to the LASPC office to interview prospective clients who are victims of domestic abuse, and LASPC has staff that meet clients at its shelter. The Family Violence Center provides counselors to assist women in pro se proceedings in Polk County.

LSCI's case management is handled using TurboCases software, which enables the program to maintain a list of all open intakes. Through this system, reports are run to determine that intakes are promptly closed out or turned into case files and that docketing of deadlines and tickling of case progress is completed. Staff are routinely made aware of the self-help materials available to clients through staffing and new advocate training as well as other program-wide training. Reprints from newsletter articles are used when appropriate to provide information quickly and efficiently to clients. Case management for LASPC is provided through the use of Kemp's CaseWorks.

Through state planning exercises such as this, as well as program-wide review of service mechanisms, the various delivery systems currently in effect are reviewed. With the decrease in federal funding, a centralized intake system which would handle advice and make referrals to the regional offices for more substantial work has been considered. The Legal Hotline for Older Iowans is providing a current test of the benefits and feasibility of a centralized intake system. A grant was received less than a year ago from the Administration on Aging to operate a hotline for older Iowans. The hotline has been in place for approximately 4 months. An assessment of client satisfaction and program effectiveness is still in the preliminary stages but shows promising results. There are substantial positives and negatives with such an approach, including the potential for loss of the local information that can augment any advice that is given. However, there is also the possibility that local office staff would be freed up to do more substantial casework. Further review of the effectiveness of this delivery approach will await additional developments.

The efficacy of the intake, advice and referral system is constantly reviewed through various mechanisms. Each regional office has an Advisory Council which includes representatives of the community as well as client members. HELP, LASPC and LSCI have Boards of Directors made up of attorneys as well as client members. These groups provide regular feedback on the office's operations and perceptions in the community. Client satisfaction surveys are also used to determine how well an office is performing. Clients are asked to comment on the services received and make suggestions for improvement. While the vast majority of surveys are complimentary, offices are routinely required to follow-up on negative comments or suggestions made in the surveys. A client and public complaint procedure is also available and regularly used to report dissatisfaction. While many complaints are with the fact that the staff cannot take a particular case due to the limited

resources, some do advise of problems that need correcting or at least of communications that need improving. Closed intakes are frequently reviewed by managing attorneys for the appropriateness of the advice and referral received. During evaluations of advocate staff, managers review intakes and cases and evaluate them. Work groups consider and make recommendations about the handling of certain kinds of intakes and the appropriate procedure for ensuring maximum success for the client.

LASPC's services are constantly reviewed by the unit leaders as well as the project director, and the program receives continuous feedback from both members of the bar association as well as the judges of the court system. As a United Way agency, it is also annually reviewed and has consistently received high marks in eight major categories which are a part of this evaluation system.

Advocate staff are also evaluated on their knowledge of community resources for purposes of referral. Because of the contacts with the community, each office has excellent knowledge of the various resources available to clients, both legal and non-legal. Referrals are routinely made to the legal clinics at the two law schools in the state, as well as to the Volunteer Lawyers Projects. Because of the relationships between the legal services offices and the private bar, a substantial volume of volunteer services are provided by the private bar.

Because of the vast service area that LSCI covers, numerous steps have been taken to ensure that potential clients are aware of LSCI's services and to make LSCI's services available to clients in distant locations. Each LSCI office has toll-free telephone numbers for clients to use. Contact for outreach purposes is routinely made with agency personnel throughout each office's service area. Recently, Rolodex cards which list each office, service area, case priorities, address and telephone numbers have been distributed within each service area to agency personnel and others who might refer people who need legal assistance. Many offices have regular outreach schedules to communities at a distance from the office. For example, the Iowa City office has monthly office hours at the Des Moines County courthouse, located in Burlington, approximately 75 miles away. The South Central office regularly visits the domestic violence shelter in Fort Dodge, approximately 95 miles away, and a community college in Creston, approximately 80 miles away. HELP engages in weekly circuit-riding to Clinton County located north of Scott County, where HELP's office is located.

Outreach efforts include presentations made to agency staff about the availability of legal services or about a legal issue that affects mutual clients. Legal services staff serve on the boards of local not-for-profit organizations and also serve on coalitions, such as the Domestic Violence Coalitions that are operating throughout the state. Other staff attend United Way Agency Directors meetings, homeless coordinating boards, advisory committee meetings for various agencies and other similar meetings.

LASPC has enjoyed strong ties to numerous agencies within Polk County that are a steady source of referrals as well as feedback in regards to services provided. It has on its staff persons who are fluent in several languages as well as having a diverse staff.

In addition, each LSCI office has a TDD to facilitate communication with the hearing impaired. Many offices have Spanish-speaking attorneys who are available throughout the program for other offices to make use of when necessary. A list of interpreters for other languages is available in each office. The offices regularly use interpreters through Iowa Department of Deaf

Services to provide sign language interpreters.

There are a number of specialized populations in the state. For example, the migrant population, for which LSCI receives a grant from LSC, is served through the Migrant Project. This Project targets those areas where migrants converge during the summer and does specialized outreach and educational events. Contact is also made with providers, such as Proteus, that provide services to the migrant population. Polk County has one of the largest Sudanese populations in the United States, and LASPC has worked with the state office on refugee services to make legal services available to that population.

The elderly are perhaps the most significant specialized population in Iowa. Iowa has the highest percentage of persons over 85 in the country. LSCI has contracts with 12 of 13 Area Agencies on Aging, ensuring that this population receives additional services. Regular outreach is conducted at meal sites and other places where senior citizens congregate. Intake is usually conducted immediately after presentations for those who are interested. Specialized clinics, sometimes with the help of volunteer attorneys, are held to provide living wills or durable powers of attorney. LSCI's Legal Hotline for Older Iowans is also a significant way to handle intake and referral involving the elderly. Because of new software that is being used for this project, more detailed analysis of the types of cases that concern seniors is being developed and will hopefully provide additional information to help focus outreach and referral. Drake Law School's Elder Law Hotline Project is focused on providing educational information on elder law issues to prospective clients, providers and attorneys. This project also will provide more extensive representation on cases referred by LSCI's Legal Hotline for Older Iowans as well as a result of educational presentations. LASPC maintains relationships with various elderly outreach programs as well as the social work offices in hospitals and care facilities.

Children continue to be of significant concern to Iowa's legal services programs. When the termination of children from the SSI program began, LSCI's toll-free number was included in the termination notices. LSCI coordinated a meeting of 11 groups to discuss how best to address the legal needs of children and families with SSI termination notices. Referrals were then made to the appropriate office around the state to assist the child with the SSI termination. Information was also disseminated among legal services staff regarding how to analyze and prepare these cases. Training via the ICN (Iowa Communications Network--a fiber optics network connecting sites throughout the state of Iowa) was made available, not just to staff of all three programs, but to volunteer attorneys as well.

Survivors of domestic violence are another population that has received considerable attention over the past several years. In addition to serving on numerous coalitions and task forces, the legal services programs have provided significant services in this area, including regular outreach to the local shelters and establishment of various projects with the private bar to assist in serving this population. For example, in Cedar Rapids, the United States Attorney's office provides representation to the battered spouse in contempt cases filed against the abuser, where, because of the possibility of jail time, the abuser has counsel appointed. LASPC helped establish the first Family Violence Center in the State of Iowa and continues to participate in coordinating services to victims of domestic abuse.

The legal services programs within the state have a long history of providing quality legal services, while trying to maximize client access and the efficient delivery of services. There are, however, areas in which improvements can be made. The area of referrals between programs is generally effective, but in some respects, additional coordination is necessary. In instances where a client might live in one service area but the case is centered in another area, particularly at some distance from the originating office, managing attorneys will call to discuss whether a case might more efficiently be handled out of another office. Since all ten LSCI offices share a common set of priorities, referrals between those offices tend to be relatively straightforward. LASPC has a different set of priorities, requiring both programs to not only consider the availability of staff resources but also whether a particular case should be handled when it does not fit within the priorities of the receiving office. To more efficiently serve clients, some resolution of this issue would be appropriate.

Telephone access to offices is sometimes limited because phone lines can be tied up. With the use of fax machines and modems, lines which used to be available for telephone use are now being diverted. Additional telephone lines would improve access in some offices, but would require additional costs as some current phone systems cannot handle additional lines. Technology also impacts on these access questions including the possibilities related to voice mail. LSCI is planning to look into the areas of technological expansion (See Technology section). LASPC has altered its staff make-up to include two full-time intake receptionists, using volunteers attorneys to augment the staff in doing intake interviews, and is, at the present time, installing a new digital telephone system which should increase the efficiency of the program in responding to a huge volume of telephone client contact.

While local Advisory Councils for LSCI offices play an important function, client representation on those councils is less than it could be. In part, this derives from the fact that ties to the client community could be improved. This continues to be an issue with which the legal services programs struggle, but it is one that needs continual work.

B. Goals to Strengthen and Expand Services to Eligible Clients

1. Efficiently handle referrals between programs.
2. Maximize client access to legal services, efficiently using existing staff.
3. Improve telephone access (see Technology section).
4. Improve ties with client communities.

C. Major Steps and Timetable to Achieve Goals

1. Efficiently handle referrals between programs
 - A. Compare priorities of two programs. Assess the types of cases that have been referred in the past. Determine the legality of taking cases outside of priorities. December 15, 1998.

- B. Arrange a meeting between LASPC and LSCI to consider possible mechanisms to handle inter-program referrals. March 31, 1999.
 - C. Draft a document reflecting the resolution of this issue. May 15, 1999.
2. Maximize client access to legal services, efficiently using existing staff
- A. After a year of operation of the Legal Hotline for Older Iowans, assess the quality and efficiency of the centralized intake, including adequacy of referrals, quality of the legal product, cases closed per advocate and other indices that would help to compare with current intake systems. Research centralized intake systems in other legal services programs involving non-elderly clients. Share the information with LASPC. January 30, 2000.
 - B. If the results are positive, prepare a timeline for expanding centralized intake beyond the Legal Hotline for Older Iowans including identification of relevant players and any budgetary considerations. June 30, 2000. Discussions with board and staff would need to occur after cost estimates were developed to handle such matters as shift in staffing, space availability, needed technology and other considerations. October 31, 2000. In addition the specifics of the referral mechanism, publicity and considerable training would need to occur before any actual shift to centralized intake could take place.
3. Improve telephone access (see Technology section).
4. Improve ties with client communities.
- A. Encourage additional contacts with client communities through regular outreach and community legal education events (See Section III).
 - B. Conduct outreach to different forums and in various manners where community members may congregate, such as churches, neighborhood associations and others. Regional offices would develop a plan for their service area to conduct additional outreach to the client community by May 31, 1999.
 - C. Review client satisfaction surveys twice each year to identify clients indicating a willingness to volunteer to assist offices and take steps to involve more volunteers in service delivery including involvement in local office Advisory Councils.

II.

COORDINATED EFFORTS AND A CAPACITY TO UTILIZE NEW AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGY TO ASSURE COMPATIBILITY, PROMOTE EFFICIENCY, IMPROVE QUALITY AND EXPAND SERVICES TO CLIENTS

A. Assessment of Strengths and Weaknesses of Current Approach

Current planning efforts in Iowa with respect to technology in legal services programs are centered on achieving the degree of technological sophistication necessary to provide efficient and effective services to clients while at the same time recognizing that quantum leaps in technology will make it impossible for legal services programs to operate at a “state of the art” level. Planning efforts have been ongoing as a result of two committees convened by LSCI and participated in by all legal services providers in the state.

The technology work group, established in 1995, began in the wake of significant cutbacks in federal resources. As a result of the work of this group, recognition was given to the fact that, as a minimum measure, all advocates should have a computer at their desk. Secondly, the decision was made that all LSCI offices should be networked. Consideration was also given to changes in LSCI’s case management systems, updating telephone technology and determining whether to make a change in terms of legal research systems from books to computer-assisted research or CD-ROM. The recommendations of the technology committee in August, 1995, were that the program transition to Windows as the operating system used on computers from DOS-based software, particularly for word processing; that staff monitor developments involving new products that become available for case management and timekeeping purposes; that LSCI move to network all nine regional offices and maintain the statewide intra-program computer network; that staff begin to explore and test alternative forms of legal research including WestLaw and CD-ROM technology; and that the program begin to study alternatives in the telecommunications area, particularly those that would be necessary for a hotline intake system.

Many of the recommendations of the technology committee have been implemented or are in the process of being implemented. All legal services advocates in Iowa have a computer on their desk. Within LSCI, the use of Novell’s GroupWise program allows for electronic dial up communications among all offices. All but three LSCI offices have internal Novell networks, and the LSCI Board of Directors has approved networking of all of the offices once local funding can be generated to pay a portion of such projects. Advocates with LASPC are internally networked and have access to WestLaw and various CD-ROM materials. LSCI’s Litigation Directors have WestLaw access, and four of the networked LSCI offices are using CD-ROM for legal research purposes involving state law. The Legal Hotline for Older Iowans is making extensive use of new case management software, T.I.M.E., developed by Western New York Law Center and may serve as a model for expanded hotline services in the future.

As a follow-up to the work of the technology committee, a library committee was created in 1997 to determine how best to make up for the discontinuation of several library resources that had occurred as a part of the 1995-1996 cutbacks. The committee is made up of advocates with legal services programs throughout the state. Following surveys of staff and discussions about library

technology with legal services advocates in other states, the library committee recommended to the LSCI Board of Directors, in August of 1998, that various library services canceled earlier should be reinstated, that various library resources be available on CD-ROM, that limited access to WestLaw be available in all offices, that Internet and HandsNet access be provided for all offices and that development of an LSCI website be considered, but not formally begun, at this time. The LSCI Board of Directors was presented with these recommendations at their meeting on August 29, 1998, with decisions being deferred until LSCI's budgetary picture was more settled.

Iowa has developed its technological capacities as a result of the work of the two committees discussed above, the direction of the LSCI and LASPC Boards of Directors and the work of individuals within the programs. The activities of the technology and library committees demonstrate that the capacity for further planning on a statewide basis is available.

The case management software used by LSCI and LASPC differs, with LSCI using TurboCases and LASPC using Kemp's CaseWorks. Both of these systems support case reporting, intake and timekeeping, and discussions have occurred between the organizations about the merits and demerits of various software packages. There has been no demonstrated need for the programs to use the same software packages, as both programs are capable of tracking and providing needed information. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, LSCI's Legal Hotline for Older Iowans is testing T.I.M.E. case management software that may be used by the programs at some future point. In addition, there have been reports made to the Iowa programs that development of case management/timekeeping software for legal services programs may be the subject of a national study.

One of the goals of state planning is to increase the amount and quality of training on technology issues. Internal training has been provided with respect to the networking of offices and the use of GroupWise within LSCI. It is anticipated that additional training will be provided in these areas. It is the recommendation of the library committee that additional training be provided to all advocates if a shift is made from legal research using books to legal research using CD-ROM or the Internet.

No formal plan has been developed for periodic replacement or upgrading of hardware and software. However, LSCI has undertaken efforts to ensure that its case management and fiscal software are Year 2000 compliant. LSCI offices are routinely surveyed to determine the need for upgrading of hardware as part of the annual budgetary process. Local fundraising is also undertaken to secure funds for upgrading technology. Software purchases are continually assessed in LSCI's central office and at LASPC.

There is no legal services website in Iowa. Consequently, CLE and pro se materials are not put on the web. Legal services programs have considered the development of a website in Iowa, and the LSCI Board of Directors has specifically discussed this issue. At the current time, however, the development of a website is not seen as an immediate priority for legal services programs in the state. Much of this is because of the fact that access to the web for legal services clients in the state is severely limited. Unlike many other states which have made major use of the Internet and have made Internet access widely available to members of the public, Iowa has not done so. Consequently, given the impoverished state of legal services clients and the lack of public access,

it is unlikely that they will have access to the Internet. If they do not have access to the Internet, placing CLE materials on a legal services website is not likely to provide useful information to clients. Section III of the state plan discusses the wide availability of CLE materials within Iowa, the distribution of a newsletter on a quarterly basis to thousands of low-income Iowans and the availability of CLE pamphlets and reprints throughout the state. These methods of delivery function as a practical and workable alternative to placing CLE materials on a website.

In addition, Iowa is unique as compared to many other states by virtue of the development of the Iowa Communications Network (ICN), which links hundreds of sites around Iowa by a closed circuit audio/visual fiber optics network. LSCI has made extensive use of the ICN for training purposes, particularly as part of the poverty law training provided to volunteer attorneys. The ICN has features which are superior to the Internet as an educational tool since it allows for instantaneous audio/visual interaction among participants in all corners of the state.

The telephone systems employed by legal services programs range from state-of-the-art digital systems in the offices of LASPC, HELP and LSCI's Northeast Iowa Regional Office to older key systems used in several LSCI offices. Telephone equipment is upgraded whenever offices are able to generate local funding or when the equipment reaches the end of its functional life. All of LSCI's offices conduct intake by telephone and several of the offices perform "real time" intake using TurboCases software for entering intake information into the office's database right at the moment the intake is being conducted. As mentioned previously, LSCI is experimenting with a telephone hotline system, and the program is submitting grant proposals to help finance the hiring of a telecommunications consultant who can assist the program in making the correct decisions concerning equipment and product purchases in the future. Developments in the telecommunications area are likely to be a major priority in the coming year.

There is currently no computerized brief and pleading bank available to legal services advocates in the state of Iowa. The LSCI library committee has considered the possibility of creating a brief and pleading bank via a website, but has not made this an immediate priority. Substantive law manuals, specifically the *LSCI Volunteer Lawyers Project Practice Manual* and the *VLP Desk Book*, are available to LSCI advocates throughout the state. The *Practice Manual* contains eleven chapters on substantive law applicable to low-income Iowans, with sections of the manual addressing 49 specific subject areas. The *Desk Book* is a shortened version of the *Practice Manual*, which provides ready reference for advocates involved in intake. Both the *Practice Manual* and *Desk Book* are available electronically to legal services staff.

The LSCI library committee has recommended that the program increase its use of electronic legal research tools to include certain items on CD-ROM, WestLaw access, Internet access and subscriptions to HandsNet for all offices. LASPC has Internet access for all advocates, WestLaw access and CD-ROM access for necessary services. As discussed above, training on these materials will be a priority for LSCI when the switch to these services is made.

Electronic communications capabilities for advocates are available in all legal services offices throughout the state. LSCI uses GroupWise for electronic communication within the program. This system supports e-mail and the transfer of documents electronically throughout the program. Briefs, pleadings, administrative materials and other items are routinely sent from one

office to another using GroupWise. The *VLP Practice Manual* is compiled by authors in all LSCI offices and submitted electronically to the LSCI Central Office for final editing. External e-mail is currently limited to LASPC and two LSCI offices. Under the library committee plan, external e-mail will become available in all legal services offices in the state.

The primary use of electronic communications for private bar involvement efforts is currently the use of the fax machine to provide information to attorneys participating in the LSCIVLP and the ISBA VLP. Although items could be sent electronically to members of the VLP, this has not been an area of great demand. In addition, training to the private bar is also provided through the Iowa Communications Network.

The current approach to technology issues relies primarily on the use of ad hoc committees to address technology issues as they arise. The strength of the current approach is that it is able to target specific problems in a relatively expeditious manner. The current approach allows for growth in technology capabilities within the framework of a strict budget. The weakness of the current approach is that there is no ongoing and formal concentrated assessment of technology needs for the future.

B. Goals to Strengthen and Expand Services to Eligible Clients

1. Provide roughly comparable technology to all legal services offices.
2. Improve use of technology as it relates to legal research and library resources.
3. Improve telephone access.
4. Establish mechanism for ongoing technology review.

C. Major Steps and Timetable Necessary to Achieve Goals

1. Finish installing local area networks in all LSCI offices within one year provided adequate funding can be obtained.
2. Link LASPC to statewide E-mail system by June 30, 1999.
3. Implement recommendations of library committee by end of second quarter 1999 provided adequate funding can be obtained.
4. Improve telephone access.
 - A. Hire telephone consultant to review possible configurations which would improve telephone access through the addition of new lines as well as services such as voice mail, etc. by March 31, 1999.
 - B. Based upon report of the consultant, consider alternatives based on funds available in the budget and which could be budgeted or fundraised for in the future by July 1,

1999.

5. Appointment of permanent technology committee involving cross-section of staff of LSCI and LASPC to develop and update the technology plan. The committee would be appointed by June 30, 1999, following completion of local area networks and installation of library committee recommendations.
6. On a more long term basis, goals include establishing an Internet and e-mail connection for all legal services advocates, available from their desk; the development of an information technology specialist; continued study on the development of a legal services website; and the development of an electronic brief bank. In addition, the programs will continue to develop new ways of using the resources that are available in Iowa using the Iowa Communications Network. These and other issues are to be addressed by the technology committee as they develop a technology plan. The projected date for the issuance of this plan is June, 2000.

III.

COORDINATED EFFORT TO EXPAND CLIENT ACCESS TO THE COURTS, ENHANCE SELF-HELP OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOW-INCOME PERSONS, AND PROVIDE PREVENTIVE LEGAL EDUCATION AND ADVICE

A. Assess the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Current Approach

Legal services providers in Iowa have long recognized that the number of advocates available to meet the needs of low-income Iowans has been and still is insufficient and is unlikely to increase appreciably in the near future. Because of this disparity, legal service providers have identified that the provision of community legal education events and materials are critical in reaching large numbers of low-income Iowans. With over 300,000 Iowans who are income eligible for legal assistance from LSCI and LASPC and less than 75 advocates across the state, it is necessary to have other mechanisms for providing service so that low-income people can recognize potential legal problems, enforce their rights and meet their responsibilities on their own.

Legal services providers in Iowa have designed a community legal education (CLE) delivery system that promotes understanding of obligations and rights under the law and to help people avoid legal problems. The materials that have been developed not only address commonly asked questions, but also provide information about issues that might not have been recognized as legal problems susceptible to a legal remedy such as applying for the Earned Income Tax Credit or asserting the rights of a nursing home resident. CLE endeavors to empower people with self-advocacy skills to settle problems before they become issues requiring the assistance of an advocate. CLE is most successful when a low-income person does not need representation in a legal matter because the person has satisfactorily resolved the issue with the help of information obtained through CLE materials.

Currently LSCI's collection of CLE publications includes 24 booklets and 14 pamphlets and fliers. Last year, over 20,171 publications were distributed in areas such as landlord/tenant law, Small Claims Court and domestic violence, among others. These publications are distributed by legal services offices throughout the state. A number of these publications are also available at many

public libraries.

The *Equal Justice Journal*, published quarterly and distributed to over 7,000 low-income Iowans, provides information on legal services and areas of law affecting low-income persons. Each issue of the *Equal Justice Journal* is planned by an editorial board composed of staff attorneys, a paralegal and the public information coordinator for LSCI. LSCI's Executive Director serves as the editor of the *Equal Justice Journal*. Printed on newsprint and in the form of a newspaper, the *Equal Justice Journal* includes 12-15 separate articles in each issue. Articles are written by staff of the program as well as individuals with other entities working with or having an interest in ensuring access to justice for low-income Iowans.

In order to be useful to clients, printed material must be presented in understandable terms and in an appropriate format. Presenting information at a reading level understandable to clients is one objective of the CLE publications. Publications are reviewed using a software program to determine readability. The goal is to achieve a 7th grade reading level for all publications, which is slightly above the standard used for many newspapers, but consistent with the educational level of most clients. Although this goal is not always met, a conscientious effort is made to put the contents of the publications in plain English which will be understood by readers of publications.

Several publications are available in a format for persons with visual impairments. The *Equal Justice Journal* is produced in a large print edition, as well as a standard tabloid version. Some booklets have been published with large 14 point type. The most popular CLE publication, *A Guide to Landlord/Tenant Law in Iowa*, has been provided to the Iowa Department for the Blind and is available in an audio version.

Four booklets, *A Guide to Landlord/Tenant Law in Iowa*, *Small Claims Court*, *General Relief*, and *A Guide to Iowa Programs for Free Medical Care* have been translated into Spanish. In addition, the outreach pamphlet entitled *Need a Lawyer But Can't Afford One?* and the pamphlet on LSCI's Migrant Project are produced in Spanish.

Posters are distributed to all county courthouses and various community organizations and agencies throughout the state, advising them of the availability of legal services. Outreach materials to advise senior citizens of a statewide hotline have been distributed through Iowa's aging network, as well as through radio, videos, newspapers and television.

Pro se materials can be an important component of a program's service delivery mechanism. In Iowa, pro se had been traditionally limited to small claims court. The jurisdiction of small claims court includes Forcible Entry and Detainer actions, replevin actions on goods valued less than \$4,000 and damage claims up to \$4,000. A number of LSCI's CLE publications provide information so that parties can represent themselves pro se in small claims court. *A Guide to Landlord/Tenant Law in Iowa*, *Small Claims Court*, *Post-Judgment Relief* and *Wage Payment Collection* all provide information that low-income Iowans can use to help themselves and present their issues before the small claims court. Administrative advocacy is also covered through the booklet on *Social Security and SSI: The Appeals Process* and through other booklets describing various agency processes, such as *Questions & Answers About DHS Appeals & Hearings*, *SSI and Social Security: Overpayments* and *A Guide to Iowa Programs for Free Medical Care: State Papers, Obstetrical/Newborn Care and County Pay*.

Iowa has adopted a pro se process for obtaining domestic abuse protection orders. Advocates from LSCI have been, and continue to be, involved in assuring that the pro se process works for low-income Iowans. LSCI advocates provided input as to content and "readability" of the forms used for obtaining protection orders. Legal services providers work with numerous domestic violence/sexual assault coalitions to ensure the pro se process is available and utilized in all of Iowa's 99 counties. Legal service providers continue to monitor this process and, in addition, provide training to lay advocates who work with domestic violence shelters. At the point where pro se representation is no longer advisable, for example where the abuser is represented or where custody of children is at issue, low-income Iowans have access through advocates who can provide advice or representation in domestic violence cases. LSCI publishes *Domestic Abuse and the Law*, which provides detailed information on both the civil and criminal aspects of domestic violence as well as providing detailed information on the pro se process. Legal services providers have also been involved in developing videotapes in cooperation with the Young Lawyer's Division of the Iowa State Bar Association on domestic violence.

Further expansion of pro se projects would probably be premature. The court system is still adapting to the huge influx of pro se domestic abuse petitions which has taxed the system to a point that additional pro se activities would not be welcomed at this time. However, the issue has surfaced and will undoubtedly arise in the future in other contexts. For example, in the area of setting and modifying child support orders, the possibility of establishing a pro se system has been discussed several times in the past, and indeed, there was legislative authorization, but no funds, to begin a pilot project. This issue has been discussed during the meetings of the Child Support Advisory Committee to the Bureau of Collections, Department of Human Services of which a legal services attorney is a member. If the circumstances were right to try such an effort again, legal services programs would be prepared to assist with the provision of materials to make it work.

Although statewide coordination with other stakeholders on additional pro se projects is not advisable at this time, there has been substantial coordination with state bar groups on many other topics. In addition to the substantial work in the area of domestic violence, legal services advocates have worked with the Young Lawyer's Division of the Iowa State Bar Association to develop videotapes on guardianship and conservatorship issues as well. Coordination with the Young Lawyer's Division was also undertaken during the 1993 and 1998 disaster declarations in order to ensure legal representation for those affected by the natural disasters of flood and storm. LASPC has also been working with the Polk County Bar Association and the PCBA VLP in studying the feasibility of developing a self-help center similar to programs in Phoenix, Miami, Chicago and Minneapolis.

Legal services providers have taken a very active role in the Iowa State Bar Association to ensure that low-income Iowans have a voice. In areas of the state that have utilized alternative dispute resolution mechanisms such as mediation, legal services providers have provided input so that low-income persons are not excluded from the process. The LASPC Project Director serves on the Iowa Bar Law Office Management Section as well as on the Bench and Bar Committee of the Polk County Bar Association. The committee has equal members from the bar association and judiciary. Last year, LSCI attorneys were involved in 13 committees and commissions connected with the Iowa State Bar Association. They include the following:

Family Law Section Council
AIDS Committee of the Health Law Section
Young Lawyers Division Domestic Abuse Subcommittee
Young Lawyers Division Human Needs Committee
Administrative Law Section Council
Alternative Dispute Resolution Section Council
Health Law Issues for the Elderly Committee of the Health Law Section
ISBA Annual Planning Committee
ISBA Legal Aid Committee
Young Lawyers Division Service to the Elderly Subcommittee
Iowa State Bar Association Professional Committee
Iowa Supreme Court Commission on the Unauthorized Practice of Law
Women and Minorities Committee

Legal Services attorneys have been involved in the Iowa Courts 2000 Project to help plan the future of Iowa courts. As part of that study, there was a commitment made in the report that low-income Iowans had access to the courts. Currently, a legal services attorney serves on the Supreme Court Advisory Committee on Rules. Many legal services attorneys are also on county bar committees.

Legal services programs have worked to be part of statewide efforts to identify legal needs and provide education to service providers and clients in hard to serve populations. In recognition of the statewide nature of many problems, LSCI supports a statewide mental health/homeless project, a statewide migrant farmworker project, and used to have a statewide farm project, providing services to low-income farmers. Legal services staff in Iowa have been active presenters in the Iowa Governor's Conference on Aging, statewide mental health training and numerous other statewide trainings.

B. Establish Goals to Strengthen and Expand Services to Eligible Clients

1. Legal services providers will continue the current broad and aggressive efforts in community legal education, both with written materials and in public presentations.
2. Legal services providers will continue to work with the Iowa State Bar Association, Iowa courts and human services providers to identify barriers for participation in the legal system of low-income Iowans and to develop pro se and ADR opportunities.
3. Legal services will continue to review CLE materials, both as to relevance to the low-income population and to make sure that the materials are culturally and linguistically appropriate for clients served.
4. Legal services programs will assess making greater use of technology for distribution of CLE materials, community legal education presentations and written materials.

C. Determine the Major Steps and a Timetable Necessary to Achieve These Goals

For all of the above goals, legal services providers shall meet annually to coordinate efforts to create greater access to the courts, develop self-help systems and preventive education.

1. Legal services providers shall assess all publications on an annual basis to determine relevancy to clients' needs, as well as cultural and linguistic appropriateness.
2. Legal services programs will continue to annually review census information concerning minority population and linguistic minority populations within the state to assure that appropriate materials are available.
3. Legal services providers shall develop outreach consistent with program priorities to reach as many low-income clients as feasible, including hard to reach populations, such as the institutionalized, minorities, farmworkers and other populations. LSCI's Public Information Coordinator will meet with LSCI's Managing Attorneys at least annually to discuss outreach and CLE programs.
4. Legal services providers shall encourage participation of advocates with bar associations, coalitions and Iowa courts. Waiver of fees for legal services advocates will be explored.
5. LSCI's Public Information Coordinator will continue to identify opportunities to work with video training materials and other alternative mechanisms for CLE on issues affecting low-income Iowans.
6. Legal services providers will continue to identify ADR programs and efforts to make sure that the services and needs of low-income Iowans are taken into account in such programs.
7. LSCI and LASPC will explore whether CLE materials developed by LSCI might be made available in Polk County by March 1, 1999.
8. A meeting will be convened by December, 1999 to assess whether CLE materials should be made available electronically and whether a legal services website should be developed in Iowa.

IV.

COORDINATION OF LEGAL WORK AND A CAPACITY TO PROVIDE TRAINING, INFORMATION AND EXPERT ASSISTANCE NECESSARY FOR THE DELIVERY OF HIGH QUALITY ASSISTANCE

A. Assess the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Current Approach

The LSC-funded programs in Iowa coordinate closely in the area of training and information sharing. LSCI has been in existence for over 21 years and has traditionally allocated significant

resources to training. LSCI has, therefore, taken the lead in planning and delivering training. A training responsible person (TRP) was designated in 1991. Jan Rutledge, the Managing Attorney of LSCI's Iowa City Regional Office, has been the TRP since 1991. She is a former classroom teacher and is often called upon as a trainer. In 1998, she provided training on home modification at the Governor's Conference on Aging. In 1997, she provided a training of trainers for visiting Justices from the Supreme Court Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina, and also provided training on landlord-tenant law at a statewide training for Associate District Court Judges in Iowa. She has been responsible for training surveys and developed training plans. Staff members in all ten LSCI offices are included in the process. A formal assessment of training needs has not been performed every year. Staff from both programs are invited to trainings.

LASPC has utilized training programs provided through the bar associations and has encouraged staff members to participate in bar-sponsored functions. In addition, programs sponsored by the National Consumer Law Center, a national coalition on domestic abuse programs, as well as NLADA-sponsored training programs have been used to augment local training programs. Continuing legal education programs conducted by Drake University Law School as well as LSCI have also been used. Management training generally has been provided through United Way of Central Iowa, and the two senior leaders are both enrolled in a year long management training program.

In addition to in-house trainings, each program sends employees to appropriate trainings sponsored by local or state bar organizations or regional or national training providers. Each program can best assess the needs of its employees for individual trainings. LSCI has sent one or more managing attorneys to management training annually. NLADA training has been attended regularly, but not every year, due to budget constraints. LSCI managing attorneys have been trained on sexual harassment. The two project directors in Iowa attend the two Midwest Project Director meetings held each year, a significant portion of which is devoted to strategizing and training. The remainder of the narrative will only deal with the trainings provided collaboratively by the Iowa programs.

The major categories of training offered on an ongoing basis are:

New Advocate Training

Every year, a training is provided for new advocates in all of LSCI's ten offices. Until this year, LASPC has had very few new hires. New LASPC advocates will be included in the 1998 new advocate training. New advocate training is a combination of substantive matters and skills training. Each year, new advocates are asked to evaluate the training. Their comments have led to refinements in the course content and delivery. The form also asks the new advocates to indicate any unmet training needs. For example, evaluations from 1997's new advocates indicated a need for training in discovery and trial preparation. A one-day training was set up in the spring of 1998 using clinical professors from the University of Iowa College of Law to address this need. Professors from the University of Iowa College of Law have provided trainings in the past as well at no charge. They also assist with mock oral arguments to help prepare attorneys for appeals and routinely provide legal services staff advice and consultation.

Work Group Training Days

Work groups organized around substantive areas of the law include staff members from all LSC-funded offices. The present work groups are: Children and Family, Consumer Law, Housing, Elderly/Disabled Law, Welfare and Health, and Social Security. The work groups may meet in-person, by telephone conference or correspond by mail. The work groups are solicited each spring and fall as part of an informal needs survey to determine the content of the two work group training days. Staff members from throughout the state are notified of the trainings and invited to attend without charge. Evaluations are provided on each training day, asking participants to indicate any suggestions for future training or state any unmet training needs. These trainings are approved for state continuing legal education credit.

Volunteer Lawyers Project Trainings

Each year, private attorneys participating in the VLP are surveyed to assess training needs. It is important to note that the Iowa Supreme Court has a continuing legal education requirement of 15 hours each year for all practicing Iowa attorneys. This requirement, and the fact that VLP trainings are provided free (a nominal contribution is requested) to VLP attorneys, facilitates LSCI's ability to offer widely acclaimed trainings. Each of LSCI's regional offices is also asked for input with respect to VLP training events.

The topics are selected primarily to appeal to private practitioners, but concern poverty law topics. Staff members from throughout the state often attend these trainings. The topics scheduled in 1998 include: Poverty Law Potpourri, Social Security and SSI, Legal Issues of Immigrants, Housing Discrimination, and Family Law.

All three of these training vehicles utilize a wide range of trainers. Federal and state court judges provide training each year. Attorneys in private, government or corporate practice with expertise in the areas to be covered participate as trainers. Law school professors regularly assist with training. Staff with the Iowa Attorney General's office regularly assist with both training and work group activities. Use of out of state experts has been limited the past three years.

Other Training

In addition to these three main training vehicles, the Iowa programs also collaborate in other ways. LSCI makes its two Litigation Directors available to all staff attorneys and paralegals for case consultation, advice and co-counseling. The Litigation Directors strategize about cases with staff from legal services offices on a daily basis, most commonly by telephone. Periodic visits are made to LSCI offices during which the cases being handled by all advocates are discussed. The Litigation Directors review pleadings and briefs to help ensure that the best possible representation is being provided to clients and to make certain that the arguments made on behalf of clients are consistent throughout the state. In addition, review of decisions by state and federal agencies and court is provided to determine whether cases should be appealed. Cases such as jury matters and appeals are subject to LSCI's Intensive Preparation of Appeals and Trials (IPAT) process, under which more intensive scrutiny is provided for individual appeals and trials, including mock oral arguments and

extensive assistance with the preparation of briefs and supporting materials.

Training is also provided annually to support staff on both a statewide and regional basis. In the past, the subject matter covered at these events has involved training on the use of the program's various software programs, particularly case management software. There have also been workshops on how support staff can work with distressed persons and improve their skills in interpersonal communication. Following the implementation of the Congressionally mandated changes in LSC regulations in 1996-97, LSCI coordinated a training on program compliance issues, using the Office of Inspector General's Compliance Supplement as a guide. Later this fall, in conjunction with the work group training, support staff will receive additional computer software training, including instruction on how to install a software upgrade designed to address the year 2000 issue as it relates to the program's case management software. On a regional basis, training has been coordinated involving multiple offices that have undergone the installation of local area networks. Support important vehicle for providing the latest information on program software and policy, but also serves as a way for staff in offices around Iowa to share ideas of efficiency and effectiveness of their support functions.

LSCI offices are linked with including LASPC in the e-mail system was addressed in Section II. A system for making sample briefs and pleadings available on e-mail has not yet been developed, but is certainly an idea worthy of consideration in the coming dissemination of briefs and pleadings is available through the Litigation Directors who provide samples upon request.

Another important way the programs collaborate is through work groups. As noted above, advanced offices may join work groups. The work group members may meet in person or by phone. The work groups serve a variety of functions. They help identify issues which impact on legal services' clients and develop strategies for addressing them. They also play a role in training, since all work group chairs are asked to help plan the two work group training days each year. Work groups are not the only way legislative, administrative, and judicial changes are communicated. Individual advocates may distribute, through the Administrative Memo, any items of interest. For example, Martin Ozga, one of LSCI's Litigation Directors, distributes a summary of recent Iowa Supreme Court cases, proposed or final regulations, and recent 8th Circuit decisions.

Substantive training is not the only type of training provided. Past skills trainings have included: A two-day *Training of Trainers* (once in 1997 and once in 1994); *Management Skills Training*; *Depositions*; and parts of each year's *New Advocate Training*. Except for *New Advocate Training*, skills trainings are usually conducted separate from the usual annual trainings such as work group training day. At times, a session on a work group training day will deal with a non-substantive area, such as *How to Deal Productively With Persons in an Active Phase of Mental Illness*. LSCI staff are trained every two years in the area of security. Because these trainings are carried out at the local level, there is no coordination with other programs.

Training on new technology is also provided; however, the trainings tend to be regional or program-wide, for a variety of reasons. Within LSCI, training needs in this regard vary, since networks are being phased in over time, so that some offices have need of training on network software and others do not. LSCI is experimenting with a new delivery system for computer training. A long-time support staff employee, Arlys Kness, has developed great facility with LSCI's

software programs. She has provided on-site training and telephone back up to new office managers for several years. LSCI is attempting to make her creative problem-solving skills and technical expertise more available to the program at large. Recently, part of her time has been devoted to training and troubleshooting in offices that need specific training or system refinement, especially with respect to networks. Research shows that training is most effective when delivered in the context of performing a task. It is anticipated that her assistance, either in person or on the telephone, will significantly enhance the computer training available to support staff and advocates.

B. Goals to Strengthen and Expand Services to Eligible Clients

1. Annually assess training needs and prepare training plans for staff and volunteers.
2. Assure that technology is appropriately used through program-wide and individualized training.

C. Major Steps and Timetable to Achieve Goals

1. By October 16, 1998, TRP will develop and distribute a training needs assessment instrument to employees of both programs. Have results tabulated by November 30, 1998. By January 30, 1999, develop a training plan for the year.
2. Provide training as needed to support the addition of new library technologies described in detail in Section II.
3. By June 30, 1999, assess the effectiveness of providing computer assistance and training to LSCI offices through on-site training and follow-up consultation by Arlys Kness.
4. Expand the use of the Iowa Communications Network for training opportunities and to facilitate staff interaction and work group meetings.
5. Increase the involvement of the TRP to more actively review the VLP trainings provided to assure higher quality trainings.
6. Offer Training of Trainers courses periodically with the next one to be scheduled for 2000.

V.

COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION WITH, AND A HIGH DEGREE OF INVOLVEMENT BY THE PRIVATE BAR

A. Assessment of Strengths and Weaknesses of Current Approach

The structure for pro bono services in Iowa includes the Iowa State Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project (ISBA VLP) which is a separate not-for-profit entity independent of the Iowa State Bar Association (ISBA). The mission of the ISBA VLP is to assist low-income Iowans

by enhancing their access to the civil legal system by promoting and encouraging the use of pro bono legal services. The ISBA VLP strives toward this mission through statewide recruitment of volunteers, the development of programs to address special issues facing the legal community, the recognition of volunteer attorneys, and by providing technical assistance and support services to the direct delivery VLP programs. The ISBA VLP has office space adjacent to the ISBA headquarters.

The entities that are involved in placement of cases with volunteer lawyers include the Legal Services Corporation of Iowa Volunteer Lawyers Project (LSCI VLP) that is responsible for placement of cases in 97 of Iowa's 99 counties. The Polk County Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project (PCBA VLP) is responsible for placement of cases in Polk County. The PCBA VLP receives no LSC funds and is, therefore, not subject to the LSC restrictions. The Pro Bono Project of HELP Legal Assistance and the Scott County Bar Association is responsible for placement of cases in Scott County. Because the programs generally do not cross boundaries and operate with different priorities, clients where venue and residency differ are not always linked with a volunteer attorney.

Efforts have been made to provide information and definition regarding roles of the various VLP entities in the state. Although the roles and boundaries are well defined, it is fair to say that confusion continues to exist. This confusion exists among private attorneys, members of the judiciary and clients.

In Iowa, there are 6,354 licensed attorneys of whom 2,781 are registered to participate in one of the three pro bono projects. In comparison with statistics from other states, the percentage of participation in Iowa is higher than most. According to the most recent SPAN (State Planning Assistance Network) analysis, Iowa's rate of participation tied for 5th highest in the nation.

The leadership of the bar and the judiciary in Iowa has historically been active in working to expand pro bono activities. In the past, letters encouraging participation in VLP efforts have been sent by the Chief Justice of the Iowa Supreme Court, some of the Chief Judges of the District Courts and leaders of the ISBA. Discussions regarding pro bono issues are routinely held at judicial and bar meetings. Written information on pro bono activities is included in publications and training materials.

Training and educational services are provided to VLP attorneys. The LSCI VLP publishes a two-volume *Practice Manual* that includes 11 chapters on poverty law matters. This *Practice Manual* is distributed free of charge to attorneys participating in the LSCI and Scott County VLP projects on a one per firm basis. These manuals are not available in Polk County. The manual is updated annually by staff of LSCI and HELP. For the past three years, the Iowa State Bar Association Foundation has provided funds to support the printing and distribution costs of the annual updates to the *Practice Manual*. A desk manual is also prepared and regularly updated for use by attorneys assisting with intake in one of LSCI's offices. Desk manuals are prepared both by LSCI and LASPC. Another manual has been developed which provides assistance to attorneys working with domestic abuse cases. The manual is entitled *Representing Victims of Domestic Abuse: A Volunteer Lawyers Handbook* and is printed and distributed by the ISBA VLP.

Continuing legal education is required of Iowa lawyers. The LSCI VLP, PCBA VLP and Pro Bono Project of Scott County provide free seminars for participants in the volunteer lawyers

projects. Six to ten seminars are provided annually. Announcements of the trainings are regularly sent to attorneys signed up for the LSCI VLP, as well as to the PCBA VLP for those trainings held in central Iowa. The PCBA VLP provides information about CLE trainings through its newsletter. Distribution of the training schedule through the ISBA monthly newsletter, the *Iowa Lawyer*, has not been done. The limited avenues for distribution of the CLE schedule is a weakness of the current training program. In addition to the organized statewide efforts, LSCI prepares materials on three topics each year that are used by staff for presentations at local bar functions.

For the past three years, the LSCI VLP and the Pro Bono Project of Scott County have utilized the Iowa Communications Network (ICN) for multiple site trainings. Through the ICN, a trainer can be located in one location with fiber optic video/audio hookups arranged at multiple sites (usually 10-12) around the state. Use of the ICN allows for participation of VLP attorneys near their local communities and greater efficiencies in providing training. VLPs have not, to date, taken advantage of the bar association's web page for communication purposes including training announcements.

Over 2,781 lawyers participate in VLPs in Iowa. Based on actual time reports received by LSCI and HELP Legal Assistance, 11,997.76 hours were contributed in 1997. Valued at \$80 per hour, this contribution totals \$959,820.80. Actual records have not been kept of time donated by lawyers in the PCBA VLP. The actual reported hours in LSCI and Scott County service area, divided by the number of cases closed, results in an average of 5.99 hours per case. Applying this average of 5.99 hours per case to cases closed in Polk County results in a total statewide figure of donated hours of 16,244.67, which valued at \$80 per hour, equals \$1,299,573.60.

The PCBA VLP requests that attorneys report time. If an attorney does not report actual time donated, time is estimated at 10 hours per case. The PCBA VLP values volunteer time at \$100 per hour. 772 cases were closed in 1997 by the PCBA VLP. Using the higher hourly figure and the attributed hours per case in those cases where actual time is not reported, the value of donated time in Polk County equals \$660,253. The programs should meet to determine whether greater uniformity is desired in reporting the VLP contributions statewide.

The three VLPs that place cases with volunteer lawyers closed 2,648 cases in 1997. As demonstrated by the number and value of donated hours, significant services were provided to low-income Iowans by private, government and corporate lawyers in Iowa. This contribution of time has risen each year since 1982, when the projects were first established. Clients referred to VLP programs in Iowa sometimes cannot be placed with volunteer attorneys because no attorney can be found who is willing to take the case.

Legal services offices provide an extensive amount of assistance in family law matters, particularly in domestic violence cases. The need for ongoing assistance in family law matters often results in cases being sent to VLPs. The need for assistance in these matters greatly exceeds the availability of volunteer attorneys. In an effort to try to meet this need, a panel of lawyers participating in the Family Law Section of the ISBA has been formed to provide back up and technical assistance to lawyers with limited experience in family law cases to encourage them to take these referrals. Utilization of this panel has been limited.

There are a wide variety of opportunities for participation provided to the volunteer attorneys. These avenues of participation include: direct referral of cases discussed above, advice clinics, participation in intake projects either in regional offices during regular office hours or at other locations such as domestic violence shelters, co-counseling of cases, assistance with community legal education to clients or continuing legal education to lawyers. Lawyers are now participating in LSCI's Legal Hotline for Older Iowans through a regular schedule of volunteer hours. Some of the special projects that exist fill both a need for the clients served by legal services offices and the volunteer attorneys that participate in these projects. A few examples of these projects are:

- Volunteer attorneys doing intake at a local domestic abuse shelter.
- Firms doing intake on a regular schedule at one of the regional legal services offices.
- The U.S. Attorney's Office representing survivors of domestic abuse at contempt proceedings.

Attorneys participating in the projects have the opportunity for a full spectrum of legal work and indeed do provide a full range of work. Participants provide services ranging from advice and brief service to representation at trials, administrative agency hearings, and appeals to the Iowa Supreme Court and Iowa Court of Appeals, all on a strictly pro bono basis, however, the PCBA VLP does not handle appellate matters.

Although efforts have been made by the LSCI VLP to find attorneys who have been willing to cross county boundaries in providing representation in parts of the state with fewer participating attorneys, there has been little success in this effort. A small percentage of attorneys are willing to cross county boundaries to help clients in neighboring counties. Placement of cases in some rural counties tends to be very difficult for this reason.

Referral procedures have been established by LSCI and LASPC offices to refer cases that are not handled by Iowa's legal services offices. The Legal Hotline for Older Iowans, in conjunction with the Iowa State Bar Association Lawyer Referral Committee, established a new panel for referral of older Iowans who were not low-income. In exchange for signing up to take cases pro bono, attorneys are able to be on the referral panel and receive referrals for clients who can pay a fee. These cases are not considered VLP referrals because the clients are not income eligible. A similar system is in place for the referral of many social security cases. These cases, which are not VLP referrals, are referred to attorneys who actively participate in VLPs, thereby, providing another incentive for pro bono participation. All programs work to make the most helpful and appropriate referral.

The ISBA VLP has established a low-fee panel of attorneys who are willing to serve as a guardian ad litem for individuals who are incarcerated and are the respondent in a civil matter filed in District Court. The referrals for these cases are sent to the ISBA VLP by the District Court only when a judge determines that the assistance of the program is needed in placing the case with an attorney. The attorneys who accept one of these referrals are paid at the rate of \$40 per hour up to a maximum of 10 hours. The judiciary is very supportive of this special project and feel that it is extremely beneficial to the operation of the Court.

The ISBA includes in its monthly newsletter, the *Iowa Lawyer*, articles on *Legal Services for the Poor* in Iowa. An article has been included nearly every month for the past three years. This vehicle has given greater exposure to the legal needs of low-income Iowans and the problems confronted by Iowa's legal services offices.

The VLPs provide recognition to participants. Thank you letters are sent at the time a case is closed. Personalized thank you notes are sent to those lawyers who close cases involving significant donations of time or special efforts. A small number of lawyers are identified each year for recognition at the annual Legal Services Corporation of Iowa Board of Directors meeting, the annual ISBA meeting, as well as local functions of the Polk County and Scott County Bar Associations. These lawyers are then recognized in the *Iowa Lawyer*. The projects have also published, for the past two years, an honor roll of participants in the VLPs who have closed a case, with special recognition to those donating more than 20 hours. At the time a case is closed, the client receives a Client Satisfaction Questionnaire. Notable comments are sent to the volunteer attorney.

The ISBA adopted a resolution in 1990 setting forth the aspirational goal of a minimum of 20 hours of volunteer service to low-income Iowans. The Polk County Bar Association also passed a similar resolution.

The ISBA and Iowa's legal services offices work cooperatively in client education. Video-tapes that have been prepared on domestic violence and guardianship were completed with the assistance of LSCI staff, but using the financial resources of the bar.

When natural disasters struck Iowa on a large scale in 1993, Iowa's legal services programs, VLPs and bar associations worked cooperatively to establish a disaster hotline and provided education to VLP attorneys and legal services staff on assisting people with disaster related legal problems.

The four pro bono projects in Iowa meet on a quarterly basis. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss common issues and to coordinate joint efforts.

B. Establish Goals to Strengthen and Expand of Services to Eligible Clients

- _____1. Expand the availability of pro bono services by improving communication and coordination with the ISBA and local bar associations, the judiciary, the Young Lawyers Section of the ISBA and other government entities.
2. Improve the functions of existing pro bono projects by exploring new applications of technology, training and ways to standardize referral systems and utilization of volunteers.
3. Develop a plan to assure that appropriate services are provided to clients when venue and residency are in the service areas of different VLPs.

C. Major Steps and Timetable Necessary to Achieve Goals

1. Work with the Executive Director and leadership of the ISBA, as well as local bar associations, to facilitate an understanding of pro bono and to promote a greater involvement of the ISBA with the VLP and the delivery of legal services. This will be a continuing goal for the projects implemented through attendance at state and local bar functions and informal meetings and discussions.
2. The ISBA VLP will coordinate the distribution of pro bono information to members of the bar through the ISBA Internet website. This would include information about training opportunities as well as volunteer recognition. The initial meeting will take place by January 1, 1999.
3. The projects will expand the use of the Iowa Communications Network (ICN) for training provided to VLP attorneys. The LSCI VLP will expand the 1999 training schedule to include five continuing legal education seminars to be held over the ICN.
4. The LSCI VLP will explore the possibility of providing the *Practice Manual* to volunteers on CD-ROM or over the Internet by using a password to access the manual. Investigation of this possibility will be completed by the end of the second quarter of 1999.
5. The LSCI VLP and the PCBA VLP will meet to discuss the possibility of printing and distributing the LSCI *Practice Manual* to PCBA VLP members. Discussions of how to proceed will await completion of investigation of CD-ROM distribution mentioned in goal #4. It is anticipated that initial resolution of this issue will take place by December 31, 1999.
6. Work to establish uniform standards to track donated hours statewide. The projects will discuss this topic at the last quarterly meeting of the VLP projects in December, 1998, with appropriate follow-up planned at that time.
7. Each pro bono program will investigate establishing an e-mail address to enhance communications with volunteer attorneys. Progress will be discussed at quarterly meetings. This will be a long term goal.
8. Review the already existing bar structure to determine whether revision of the Legal Aid Committee would enhance pro bono efforts in Iowa. This review will include analysis of the appointment structure and determine whether appointment of individuals with both a history of involvement with the ISBA and pro bono efforts would facilitate the committee's enhanced structure. This committee would provide some oversight and guidance to the legal services providers in the state.
9. The ISBA VLP will continue discussions with the Chief Justice of the Iowa Supreme Court to provide guidance to District Court judges on the appropriate role of judges in the recruitment and recognition of VLP participants. An effort will be made to schedule a presentation on this topic at the annual training for judges by June 30, 1999.

10. The projects will work to increase utilization of pro bono attorneys who have enrolled. This goal will be completed by the end of 1999.
11. The ISBA VLP will work to increase recruitment of attorneys, especially in the areas of unmet need. The Young Lawyers Division of the Bar will be enlisted to assist with the recruitment of individuals passing the bar. The use of county bar organizations in larger metropolitan areas will be increased. Periodic visits to these organizations will be scheduled to increase visibility and recruitment efforts. This will be a continuing goal for the projects.
12. The ISBA VLP will work to increase the number of government attorneys who participate in the VLPs by working with federal, state, and local government agencies to develop policies which will allow their employees to participate in pro bono activities. This goal will be completed by the end of 1999.
13. The VLP projects in Iowa will continue their longstanding practice of quarterly meetings to discuss issues. It will be through these meetings that further progress on many of these major steps will be planned and assigned. At the first quarterly meeting in 1999, there will be an effort to address the issues confronted by clients when venue and residency are in service areas of different VLPs.

VI.

DIVERSIFIED FUNDING AND COORDINATION OF RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

A. Assessment of Strengths and Weaknesses of the Current Approach

Iowa's legal services offices have worked effectively on statewide fundraising efforts. In the first year of the major reduction in federal funding in 1996, Iowa's Legislature and Governor approved funding in the amount of \$950,000. While state funding was reduced to \$500,000 during the 1997 legislative session, state funding was maintained despite the change in leadership of the Iowa General Assembly. The hard work of Iowa's legal services programs following the 1997 Session of the General Assembly to educate elected officials about the value of providing state support for civil legal services resulted in an increase of state funding to the level of \$600,000 in the recently completed 1998 legislative session. This funding is provided to all LSC-funded legal services offices in Iowa who together worked effectively in this effort.

At the same time that the national funding was decreased, the legal services programs initiated a statewide fundraising campaign among Iowa lawyers. The *Iowa Lawyers Campaign for Legal Services* is now in its third year. LSCI works with the ISBA president to coordinate the mailing and follow-up telephone calling phase of the campaign. In 1998, efforts are underway to initiate a president's phase of the campaign where past presidents of the bar will ask for firm donations from large firms throughout the state. The amount of funds raised has been between \$64,000 and \$68,000 during each of the first two years. Donations were received from 842 individuals and law firms in the first year from 76 of Iowa's 99 counties. The second year of the

campaign resulted in donations from 788 individuals and law firms from 75 counties. The average donation in 1996 was \$80.65. In 1997, the average donation was \$82.20. As of September 1, 1998, the average donation to the 1998 campaign is \$109.49. Greater coordination of the calling phase and initiation of the president's phase would improve the success of the campaign. Coordination with other states that have undertaken more successful bar campaigns might also benefit the Iowa effort.

When Violence Against Women Act funding first became available in Iowa, LSCI coordinated a joint application on behalf of all legal services offices in Iowa. This project was funded for two years. The funding was eliminated in the most recent year. Funding to provide assistance to victims of crime is also available through domestic violence shelters under the Victims of Crime Act. LSCI distributed information to all of Iowa's legal services offices about the availability of this funding which resulted in contracts with many of the domestic violence shelters in Iowa beginning in October 1997.

The gaming/casino industry has expanded substantially in Iowa. Part of the requirements of licensees of such establishments include gifts to not-for-profit organizations. Iowa's legal services programs have been effective in obtaining funds from race tracks in Davenport, Dubuque, Council Bluffs and Des Moines. Greater efforts need to be made to expand those sources of funding and approach other gaming establishments.

Information about various requests for proposals are shared between Iowa's legal services programs. Many of the RFP's involve local efforts. LSCI's development coordinator works with all offices in developing funding proposals.

United Way organizations provide support to all but two of Iowa's legal services offices. Currently, 13 United Ways provide support to 9 of Iowa's legal services offices. Efforts need to be continued to increase the amount of funding provided by individual United Ways as well as the number of United Ways providing support.

Funding through Boards of Supervisors has been sporadic throughout Iowa. The Polk County Board of Supervisors has recently provided a significant grant to LASPC. This is a grant that was made possible as a result of gaming funds provided to Polk County. Projects to assist counties in obtaining alternative sources of benefits to support their general relief recipients have been explored, but have not resulted in significant numbers of counties contracting with legal services offices.

IOLTA funding has been a significant source of revenue to provide legal services in Iowa. In the 1998 fiscal year, Iowa's eleven LSC-funded legal services offices received \$559,130 in IOLTA funding. In fiscal year 1999, this amount will be \$575,881. An additional \$59,032 was provided in 1998, and \$68,427, in 1999, to Story County and Muscatine County Legal Aid offices. With the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision, the future of this major funding source is now in doubt.

Presently Iowa's legal services offices have funding from 46 separate entities and hundreds of individual donors. LSC funding constitutes 54% of the budget of Iowa's LSC-funded offices. While support has been expanded beyond the more traditional potential funding sources, greater

efforts in this area need to continue as foundation and private support have been limited.

An important aspect of demonstrating the need and value of support from other funders is the manner in which the results of services are articulated. Iowa's legal services offices are working to refine outcome codes to determine the best manner in which services can be measured and documented.

The end result of these efforts has been that Iowa's legal services structure has not dramatically changed since the major reduction in federal funding in 1996. In other words, all of the offices remain open with roughly the same number of staff employed as there were prior to the 1996 federal reductions.

The joint fundraising campaign among Iowa's legal services programs does not include the ISBA VLP. Failure to have this project included resulted in some additional confusion and frustration among Iowa lawyers who feel that they are solicited by multiple requesters of donations.

B. Goals to Strengthen and Expand Services to Eligible Clients

1. Maintain and expand private support through United Ways, corporate and foundation donations.
2. Through re-evaluation and dialogue with others who raise funds from lawyers in Iowa, rejuvenate the *Iowa Lawyers Campaign for Legal Services*.
3. Expand state support to enable legal services programs to more fully meet the need for legal assistance by low-income Iowans.
4. Obtain program data and client stories in such a way to more effectively demonstrate the outcomes of services provided.

C. Major Steps and Timetable Necessary to Achieve Goals

1. Work in next 12-18 months with the Iowa Supreme Court and the Interest on Lawyers Trust Account Commission, along with the ISBA, to monitor developments in the IOLTA case and determine if adjustments in Iowa's system are in order.
2. Each fall, meet with at least 25 elected officials to describe the nature of the provisions of legal services as well as annual meetings with representatives from the Governor's office.
3. Work with Fundraising Committee of LSCI and LASPC Boards of Directors to assess by March 1, 1999 other statewide opportunities including ways to expand the fundraising campaign among Iowa lawyers. Use of consultants from other states with successful statewide campaigns is recommended. These efforts will also explore opportunities to involve other community leaders in expanding funding for equal access to justice initiatives. This assessment will include analysis of the potential for coordinated

fundraising efforts to include the ISBA VLP and other VLP Projects including adaptation of a calendar system assigning fundraising for each entity for different times of the year. Information obtained by LSC-funded programs' Fundraising Committees will be shared with the VLP Projects in Iowa and others necessary to an effective fundraising campaign.

4. Assess the potential for additional avenues for financial support from the legal community including donations by Iowa lawyers and the Iowa State Bar Foundation. This will include discussion with fundraisers from other states and the Fundraising Project.
5. The programs should meet by July, 1999 to discuss collaborative and coordinated approaches to foundations and corporations with emphasis on technology to improve service provision.
6. Develop a program to solicit donations of furniture or equipment by private attorneys to LSC and VLP programs by September 1, 1999.
7. Assess the method for obtaining Cy Pres awards through residuals from litigation handled by non-legal services staff by January 31, 2000.
8. Development Director will attend conferences and research planned giving opportunities by September 1, 2000.
9. Continue refinement of the measurement of outcomes of legal services representation through LSCI's Administrative Assistants working with staff to train on identifying outcomes.
10. Renew participation in the Fundraising Project's Annual Conference as well as ongoing activities throughout the year.

VII.

A CONFIGURATION THAT MAXIMIZES THE EFFECTIVE AND ECONOMICAL DELIVERY OF HIGH QUALITY LEGAL SERVICES THROUGHOUT THE STATE

A. Assess the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Current Approach

The configuration in Iowa, which has been in place since LSC funding first became available to the state of Iowa, includes only two LSC-funded programs. The Legal Aid Society of Polk County (LASPC), which provides services to residents of Polk County, has been in existence since 1950. The Legal Services Corporation of Iowa (LSCI) provides services to residents in Iowa's 98 remaining counties. Services are provided by LSCI through offices located in Cedar Rapids, Council Bluffs, Dubuque, Des Moines, Iowa City, Mason City, Ottumwa, Sioux City and Waterloo, and since 1977, LSCI has subcontracted with HELP Legal Assistance in Davenport to provide services to residents in Scott and Clinton Counties. After extensive discussions, this configuration was arrived at in the ISBA as the most realistic model for providing services in Iowa.

For several reasons, Polk County has qualities and characteristics that set it apart from the rest of the state. Being the site of state government and the largest urban area with an economy that centers around the insurance industry and not agriculture, Polk County has always been distinctive. Therefore, the fact that it has several institutions and features unique from those throughout the state should be understood in that context. The existence of a separate legal services program is just one example of how Polk County residents have developed independent of the rest of the state. Civil legal assistance for the poor was available in Polk County several years before similar services were available in the state. There are several other human services and legal entities that are unique to Polk County, including its array of services to the elderly and the specialized legal services provided by the Youth Law Program.

There have been many developments over the past 21 years that have brought the programs to a closer working relationship and a more integrated delivery system. At the same time, differences exist in large part because of the fact that LASPC provides services in what is almost exclusively an urban area, while LSCI provides services to what is largely a rural area. This has resulted in the development of systems which are sometimes divergent, but which are designed to best meet the needs of clients in the service areas. An example of this local divergence is the setting of priorities, where LSCI and LASPC have created differing priorities based on the differing needs of their clients. The LSC Act was structured to allow a great deal of local control regarding compliance with the regulatory structure that is put in place by LSC and decisions regarding priority legal needs for clients. The Boards of Directors for LASPC and LSCI have exercised this local autonomy to make the decisions they believe best, based on the input received from their respective local communities.

Maximize Access for Clients

Intake systems are designed to provide easy access to service. Clients may contact offices in-person or through toll-free telephone access. Since the entire LASPC service area is within the same calling area, no WATS lines are needed in order to provide client telephone access free of charge. Each LSCI office has established a regular schedule of intake hours. Although the handling of intake during all regular office hours would be preferable given unlimited funding, some limitations on the number of hours available for intakes are necessary and desirable, and further significant and important program objectives, including: (1) maximizing the ability of attorneys to handle extended service cases; and (2) allowing for local differences which impact staff availability (e.g., circuit-riding schedules; intake hours at domestic violence shelters; regularly scheduled court hours for hearing such matters as temporary and permanent orders of protection, evictions, temporary support and custody, default dissolutions of marriage, and other matters in which legal services advocates are routinely involved). Addressing these access realities and the issue of handling extended service cases more efficiently and effectively would require a major reallocation of resources to determine whether a system such as statewide intake could increase the access of clients to the full range of legal services. Disadvantages of a statewide intake system include more limited ability to determine trends in local areas. This is particularly true as it relates to landlord/tenant problems and problems with local agencies providing income maintenance programs and health care to low-income individuals where it is essential to be able to discern local trends. Legal services providers in Iowa are exploring alternative delivery methods to maximize services to clients including LSCI's statewide Legal Hotline for Older Iowans.

Maximize Effective Legal Services to Clients

The existing configuration does an excellent job of assuring effective, high quality legal service to clients. Relevant features of the existing structure include:

- LSCI has two Litigation Directors who are available to staff throughout the state to provide technical assistance and training.
- Formal work groups involve staff in all legal services offices to facilitate both training and strategizing regarding a wide range of substantive and procedural legal problems.
- Training is provided to new advocates throughout the state.
- Training provided through the VLPs as well as other program directed trainings are available to all legal services staff. These training have included other experts including representatives from Iowa's law schools as well as other experts from both in and outside of Iowa.
- The e-mail system allows for effective communication among all LSCI offices. Although LASPC is located in the same building as LSCI (effective June 1, 1997) and communication is regularly conducted between the programs, LASPC should be hooked up to the e-mail system of LSCI to enhance communication possibilities.
- Formal case staffings, which allow all or selected advocates to be involved in a determination of facial merit, and to engage in issue spotting, analysis and strategizing.
- The increasing use of technology to maximize efficiencies in a wide variety of intake and case management areas, including the ability to immediately input eligibility and client related data into the case management system; the ability to perform immediate, computerized conflict checks; the use of case management tickler systems; immediate access to the computer client screen for identification of the advocate handling a particular case, etc.
- An Administrative Memorandum is circulated almost daily including program news as well as substantive legal developments. LASPC has not consistently been included as a recipient of relevant information through the Administrative Memorandum.
- The work of the programs collectively, with the bar and with other providers (such as the Legal Services Developer of the Iowa Department of Elder Affairs and the ISBA VLP) has been effective in coordinating training opportunities in the state and coordination of legal education materials as evidenced by the Domestic Violence Videotape and the Guardianship Videotape.
- The programs have worked together in developing intake manuals to be used by private, government and corporate attorneys assisting with intake.
- The programs worked together to assure that the best delivery of services is given through

LSCI's recently organized Legal Hotline for Older Iowans.

- LSCI's extensive community legal education materials, including the quarterly newsletter, *The Equal Justice Journal*, is available to people throughout the 98 counties served by LSCI, but arrangements have not been made to facilitate its availability to residents in Polk County.
- LSCI currently produces a *VLP Practice Manual* which provides legal information on approximately 50 substantive topics. As discussed in the section on involvement with the private bar, a goal is to investigate the possibility of making the *Practice Manual* more widely available.

Delivery System Makes Highest and Best Use of Available Resources

- Resource development is coordinated through joint fundraising efforts evidenced most clearly by the state appropriation and the bar campaign. Communication regarding other funding opportunities is done regularly.
- Coordination of VLP efforts has been effective, but could be enhanced through greater coordination of training opportunities and other mechanisms discussed in Section V above.
- Programs work together effectively on utilizing new technology including technology for library resources as well as internal program systems. Two committees that have existed in the past three years to review these policies have included representatives of LSCI and LASPC. The committees also include a cross-section of staff representing support staff, advocates and managers.
- The existing configuration minimizes administrative duplication. Fundraising is handled by each regional office but is provided back up and technical support statewide. Contacts with the local legal community are enhanced through the current structure. Responsiveness to the needs of clients and the local legal community are facilitated by the structure which is currently in place.
- The involvement of the legal community in providing legal services is enhanced through this existing configuration both through volunteer efforts as well as work with the leadership of the ISBA. This effectiveness is evidenced by the bar's involvement in the annual *Iowa Lawyer's Campaign for Legal Services* and on behalf of state funding and volunteer recruitment. The state bar is extremely supportive of Iowa's legal services programs as currently configured.
- Coordination of purchasing has not taken place and could be enhanced.
- Review of library resources through the recently completed Library Technology Report has brought about increased sharing of information, greater coordination of library services between LASPC and LSCI and minimization of duplication.
- There have been regular communications between LASPC and LSCI regarding the

compliance with various LSC regulations.

- A weakness of the existing system is the different mechanism for tracking clients served and the outcome of legal services provided.

System Encourages Innovation

- LSCI encourages local fundraising for a variety of special projects by managing attorneys. To the extent that these fundraising efforts are successful, LSCI at the state level works closely with the managing attorney to make the special project operational, whether it be in terms of increased staffing, equipment acquisition, or other service delivery areas. To the extent that an office is successful in equipment or technology grants, LSCI encourages such technological improvements. One example is the Davenport office, which in recent years has acquired special grants for computerized legal research and the installation of a voice mail system.
- In part as a result of the relocation of LSCI's Des Moines offices to the building in which LASPC is located, the coordination of services and innovation has been encouraged. Through regular communications LASPC and LSCI advocates have been involved with training, work group discussions and innovative thinking regarding representation of clients.
- The library and technology committees have resulted in greater innovation as evidenced by the availability of computers for each advocate, the projected networking of all legal services offices throughout the state, the existence of comprehensive case management systems, the increased use of electronic means of performing legal research and the projected availability of statewide Internet access.
- The configuration has resulted in securing new funding as evidenced by VAWA funding, the state bar campaign and the state appropriation. Funding has also been received to establish LSCI's Legal Hotline for Older Iowans which has allowed for new projects and experiments regarding the most effective way of delivering services to clients. It has also developed the referral mechanisms between offices.
- The co-location of the Des Moines offices of LSCI and LASPC has resulted in regular communication and sharing of results as it relates to clients as well as fundraising and other developments.
- LSCI employees are formally encouraged to be innovative in every area of the legal services practice. Recognizing the vitally important role of clerical/administrative support personnel, LSCI periodically brings all office managers and other support personnel together, not only for purposes of training, but to encourage the sharing of innovative service enhancement systems which have been developed in local offices. A prime example of this is the confidential secretary/office manager in the Cedar Rapids office, who has developed and implemented numerous computer-based efficiencies in a wide variety of intake, case management and administrative areas. Not only has she been encouraged at both the local

and state level, but her efforts are now being rewarded through a formal change in her job description by means of which she will share her innovations and expertise with the staff of other offices.

Delivery System allows Responding Effectively and Efficiently to New and Emerging Client Needs

- See discussion of Hotline above.
- When disaster struck Iowa again in 1998 with 81 counties declared disaster areas, the programs coordinated outreach and client service to low-income individuals with legal problems involving natural disasters.
- The state support function which LSCI assumed in the 1970's as a part of its original budget, even without state support funding from LSC, has continued with the recent elimination of that state support funding. Sharing of information regarding new legal problems confronted by low-income Iowans is done regularly. The most recent examples include joint representation of mentally retarded clients seeking appropriate placement and payment for those placements and discussions concerning the loss of employment and unemployment benefits for clients wrongfully accused of having engaged in abusive behavior.
- There have been regular discussions regarding the software systems used. Each program uses different software at this time. LSCI anticipates changing software programs in the future and will coordinate closely with LASPC in making this decision.
- Iowa's various United Ways provide significant funding for legal services. At the present time, only two LSCI offices do not receive United Way funding. LSCI offices are encouraged to participate in their local, formal United Way Needs Assessments. In addition, as part of the LSC-mandated priority setting process, regional offices are encouraged to seek the input of local United Way staff and volunteers in the priority setting process.

Goals to Strengthen and Expand Services to Eligible Clients

1. Increase cost savings through coordinated purchasing and continuing communications regarding technology and library resources.
2. Enhance fundraising through greater coordination on bar fundraising campaign and other areas of joint interest.
3. Greater consistency in tracking of services provided and outcomes achieved in order to better document the value of providing civil legal services to low-income people.
4. Continued and expanded efforts to increase communication at all levels between organizations.

Major Steps and Timetable Necessary to Achieve Goals

1. Telephone communication between the president of each organization's Board of Director's will be initiated by January 1, 1999 with at least quarterly contact thereafter.
2. Program Administrator or other person responsible for purchasing will meet to talk about coordination of purchasing by December 15, 1998.
3. Discussion of case tracking software and development of outcome codes for clients will be discussed and assessed by February 1, 1999; LASPC should be hooked up to LSCI's e-mail system by June 30, 1999.
4. Greater coordination of training will be implemented as discussed in Section IV above.
5. Greater coordination of fundraising will be implemented as discussed in Section VI.
6. With the anticipated retirement of Robert Oberbillig, Executive Director of LASPC, LSCI will assist the board and staff with any issues related to transition and compliance with LSC regulations.

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